Nixon Is Expected To Go Home Soon

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LONG BEACH, Calif., Nov. 11—Former President Nixon's doctors expect to discharge him from the hospital this week, probably Thursday or Friday, they said today.

The doctors said the "small patch" of pneumonia in the lower lobe of his right lung is getting better with antibiotics treatments, and that the amount of fluid in his left lung is decreasing.

Dr. John C. Lungren, Mr. Nixon's personal physician, said that doctors are running tests to make sure that the former President has recovered fully from his lung ailments—which Lungren called "not an uncommon post-operative problem."

"Clinically," said Lungren, "he has shown improvement in both lungs. We would like to see the lung problem cleared up before we send him home.

"Depending on a favorable outcome of these studies, we are hopeful that he can be discharged from Memorial [Hospital Medical Center of Long Beach] sometime this week."

Now that the complications that followed an operation Oct. 29 to prevent possibly life-threatening blood clots from flowing from his lift leg to his lungs are diminished, doctors have started to treat Mr. Nixon's underlying medical problem—phlebitis.

Lungren said that the former President once again is getting coumadin pills, a blood-thinning anti-coagulant drug, in an attempt to prevent clots from forming.

Mr. Nixon took coumadin in high doses before he was readmitted to the hospital here almost three weeks ago. New dosage schedules have been worked out, however, using special computer studies at the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond based on the details of blood tests taken while Mr. Nixon was on the drug previously.

The alternative treatment is to give the former President another anti-coagulant drug, heparin, which must be given by injection or intravenous drip instead of orally. This would require that Mr. Nixon remain in the hospital, something he doesn't want to do.

Lungren said that Mr. Nixon spent "a comfortable night" and that his vital signs—temperature, blood pressure, respiration and pulse—are stable and within the normal ranges.

He has resumed a normal diet after being confined to soft foods and liquids. Although he is still in a 'weak physical condition," Lungren said Mr. Nixon is walking around his hospital room with the help of nurses and a corpsman.

Lungren said blood tests run last week failed to disclose the reason for the sudden and unexplained drop in Mr. Nixon's platelet count. Platelets are a clotting factor in the blood.

"The low platelet condition of last week," said Lungren, "was of undetermined cause and cleared up spontaneously."

In an effort to clear his lungs, the 61-year-old former President gets twice-a-day positive pressure breathing treatment, in which air under pressure is forced into his lungs to expand all of their air sacs. He is also told by his doctors to cough freqently to loosen any sputum in his lungs and to breathe deeply.

Lungren said that Mr. Nixon's blood pressure dropped when he went into shock from a 150 over 80 to 90, to a low of 60 over 30 to 40. Patients with a blood pressure that low will not survive unless they are given immediate treatment such as Mr. Nixon received from intensive care nurses and doctors at the hospital here. This treatment included blood tranfusions, the replacement of fluid in the body, lowering of his head to let blood get to his brain, and drugs.